

ORCHID 911

Orchids are beautiful, delicate looking plants that can brighten up anyone's day.

And incorporating them in your house is an inexpensive way to add color and elegance to your living or work space. But sometimes their elegance can become in jeopardy when accidents strike.

Fear not, though!

We've compiled a list of common orchid emergencies and tips on what to do after a mishap is discovered.



My Pet Ate My Orchid!

You may come to find one day that your furry friend has nibbled at your orchid plant. We understand your immediate concern is for the well-being of your pet and whether or not the orchid is toxic.

Good news!

Just Add Ice Orchids are not poisonous to pets, and many orchids are labeled as safe by The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA).

Helpful tip:

Try misting the plant and sprinkling the leaves with cinnamon or cayenne pepper to dissuade your pet from thinking the orchid would make a nice after dinner snack



My Orchid Plant was Knocked Over:

You will most likely have to repot your plant if your orchid was knocked over and the spill was particularly bad. Remove any media attached to the roots and place the orchid plant back into the container so that the base of the lowest leaf is approximately a half inch below the rim. Gently scatter the new media around the roots, pressing it down lightly with your fingers, and then carefully tap the pot to settle the media. Continue to add media until it reaches the base of the lowest leaf. Make sure your orchid receives sufficient water after repotting; misting the leaves the first few weeks will help the roots.



What's Happening to My Blooms?

Orchid flower loss is a normal part of an orchid's lifecycle. Experiencing premature or sudden bloom or bud loss, though, can be the result of:

A sudden temperature change.

Phalaenopsis orchids thrive when daytime temperatures range between 65 - 80°F and nighttime temperatures drop slightly to 60- 70°F. If you do not display your orchid in a temperature-controlled room, you may need to move it to a cooler location at night.



Also, keep in mind that your plant should be placed where it will not be subject to sudden air flow from heating or air conditioning ducts, open windows or doors that are opened and closed frequently.

The plant is too dry. Orchid roots are a great indicator for watering. Well-watered roots should be a healthy green color, while grayish-white roots indicate more water is needed. **Try soaking the plant (only the roots/bark) in a bucket of water for 2 minutes.** Since orchids hate to sit in water, be sure to let it leach out the clear growing pot before placing the plant back in the decorative pot. Also, you can try misting the orchid leaves a couple times during the day, making sure the leaves are dry by nightfall.

The plant's roots are experiencing problems. It can get pretty cramped in that clear container so it may be time to repot your orchid. After removing your orchid from the container and ridding the roots of excess media, trim off any dead or dying roots. These roots will be brown and soft, as opposed to live roots — which are firm and white or green. Then follow the steps previously explained to repot in a slightly larger container and new potting medium.



The Stem Broke:

If one of the flowering stems has broken, you might be tempted to wrap some tape around it and pretend it didn't happen...

but it's not likely to stay unnoticed for long! Besides, leaving it like that invites infection — which could do a lot more damage. Instead, cut the orchid flower spike above where it has broken, and put it in a vase with water, like you would with any cut flower. Then, cut the remaining broken flower spike down to the base of the orchid. This will encourage new flower spikes to grow!



What's Growing on My Orchid?

If you discover tiny tufts of cotton on your plant, you have mealy bugs to deal with. These white, oval bugs can also produce a large amount of a sticky sweet substance called honeydew, which can give plant leaves a tacky feel. Gently wipe insects off the leaves with a cotton ball dipped in a very small amount of alcohol and remove any mealy bugs from soil. Then spray your plant with the same diluted horticultural

oil or insecticidal soap. If you find a sticky substance on the leaves but no white tufts, your Just Add Ice Orchid is not harmed. This sticky substance can occur in the fall when temperatures are cooler and can be removed by wiping the leaves with a warm, wet towel.



Yikes! There are Bugs on My Orchid!

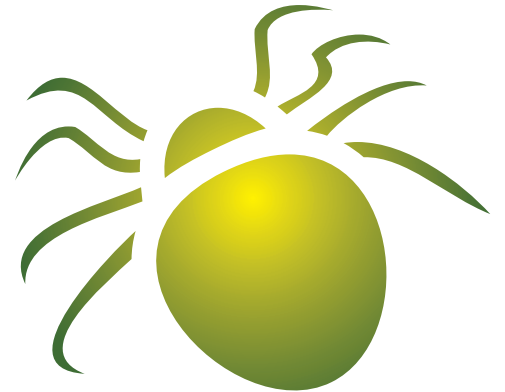
Creepy, crawly critters are never fun to discover on your orchid.

One of the most common pests known to orchids is spider mites.

They're tiny, greenish-yellow insects with eight legs that favor dry conditions and are often found on the underside of leaves, along with tiny webs. Spider mites' feeding causes the leaves to develop yellow spots and can even turn the entire leaf yellow. Another

common pest is scales. Scales are tiny black insects crawling on the undersides of leaves that create small white bumps along the leaves

or flower spike of your orchid. If you detect that your plant has a pest, isolate it immediately. Then to eliminate them, use horticultural oil or insecticidal soap found at any garden center and dilute it with water before spraying your plant.



Why did My Orchid Plant Change Color?

There are many reasons why different parts of your orchid may have suddenly changed colors.

Blooms:

Faint green spots on a bloom indicate the flowers are aging, which is a natural process but can be accelerated when the plant goes through stages of being too dry.

Buds:

Unopened buds and their stems that turn pink is an indication of "bud blast," or aborted buds. Bud blast is most often caused by sudden temperature or environmental changes. Since buds are the most sensitive part of an orchid, they shouldn't be touched. If you need to touch the orchid's buds, however, make sure you wash your hands or use sanitizer. Contaminated orchid buds will abort in order to save the health of the entire plant.



aborted bud

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Leaves:

Dark green leaves indicate that your orchid is not getting enough light. Move the plant to a brighter room, but avoid direct light. White leaves, particularly if they subsequently die and turn black, indicate that your orchid is getting too much light. Move the plant out of direct sunlight and away from west-facing windows. Yellow leaves can be a bit trickier. If only the bottom leaf is turning yellow, your orchid is probably sloughing off a mature leaf to make room for new growth. If you find yellow spots and the entire leaf turns yellow, your orchid most likely has spider mites, as previously explained.



Stem:

Once the flower stem starts to turn brown, typically no more flower buds will be formed on that stem. Remove the entire brown flower spike an inch from the base of the plant. The orchid will now be able to put more energy back into the leaves and roots! If new growth starts to grow upwards and the tip takes on the appearance of a mitten, you are most likely observing a new flower spike.

Even though orchids appear delicate, they can be surprisingly resilient when cared for properly, lasting weeks and months longer than traditional flowers! Refer to our website for more helpful tips on how to care for your Just Add Ice Orchid.


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It's Just That Simple.

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